

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, EAID, LI, US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT TOLBERT INAUGURATED

SUMMARY: INAUGURATION PROGRAM WENT OFF REMARKABLY EFFICIENTLY. PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS ENUMERATED OBJECTIVES AND DIMENSIONS OF AS YET UNFINALIZED FOUR-YEAR-PLAN. NEW IMPULSES HAVE BEEN ADDED TO GOVERNMENTAL ENERGY BUT NO RADICAL CHANGES IN COURSE OF POLICY HAVE BEEN REVEALED. IDI AMIN WAS CLEARLY STAR PERSONALITY ON SCENE, OVERSHADOWING EVEN TOLBERT. USDEL MADE FINE IMPRESSION, WAS WARMLY RECEIVED AND GOT ADEQUATE COVERAGE BY MEDIA. END SUMMARY.

1. INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT AND VICE PRESIDENT GREENE AND ATTENDANT FESTIVITIES PREOCCUPIED EVERYONE'S ATTENTION FOR MOST OF LAST WEEK, INDICATED ADDITIONAL IMPULSES OF GOVERNMENTAL ENERGY, BUT REVEALED NO RADICAL NEW COURSES OF POLICY. PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL SPEECH ANNOUNCED FOUR-YEAR, 415-MILLION-DOLLAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN (STILL (UNPUBLISHED) AND EXPOUNDED USUAL TOLBERT THEMES OF DEVELOPMENT, SELF RELIANCE AND TOTAL INVOLVEMENT ON PART OF ALL OF SOCIETY. PRESIDENT SAID HE IS DETERMINED TO FOLLOW REGOROUS PROGRAM TO RID SOCIETY OF CORRUPTION.

2. PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS (WRITTEN TXT NOT YET AVAILABLE) SET AS MAIN OBJECTIVES OF HIS NEW ADMINISTRATION INCREASE OF PER
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CAPITA INCOME THROUGH INCREASED AND DIVERSIFIED PRODUCTION;

CONTINUED EMPHASIS ON LIBERIANIZATION POLICY IN ALL AREAS OF ECONOMY; AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH TO RAISE LIVING STANDARDS - ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS. ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT SPOKE IN GENERAL TERMS, HE INCLUDED FOLLOWING SPECIFIC TARGETS: (A) INTRODUCTION OF IMPROVED METHODS OF RICE CULTIVATION; (B) CLEARING OF 82,000 ADDITIONAL ACRES FOR THREE CROPS; (C) CREATION OF 90,000 NEW STUDENT PLACES AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL IN RURAL AREAS; (D) ESTABLISHMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER IN MONROVIA; (E) CONSTRUCTION OF AT LEAST 600 LOW-COST HOUSES; (F) CONSTRUCTION OR IMPROVEMENT OF 160 MILES OF PAVED ROADS AND 300 MILES OF LATERITE AND FEEDER ROADS; (G) REHABILITATION AND EXPANSION OF NATIONAL TELEPHONE NETWORK; AND (H) ERECTION OF EARTH SATELLITE STATION TO IMPROVE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE SERVICE. FROM FOREGOING IT CLEAR PRESIDENT HAS NOT PROMISED RADICAL CHANGES IN POLICY, BUT RATHER STRONGER PUSH BEHIND PRESENT EFFORTS. SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW CABINET (REPORTED SEPTEL) CONFIRMS EMBASSY'S CONFIDENCE IN ITS JUDGMENT THAT NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT RADICALLY DIFFER FROM LAST.

3. UNDOUBTED HIGHLIGHT OF ENTIRE WEEK'S PROGRAM WAS IDI AMIN. FROM HIS ARRIVAL WITH GUNS ON BOTH HIPS, WHICH HE ALSO WORE TO INTERCESSORY SERVICE, UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE, SIMILARLY ACCOUTRED, HE WAS ONLY PERSONALITY TO EVOKE ANY SPONTANEOUS ENTHUSIASM. AT INAUGURATION CEREMONY ITSELF, HIS ENTRY INTO HALL SET OFF EMOTIONAL REACTION THAT COMPLETELY DWARFED RECEPTION ACCORDED PRESIDENT UPON HIS ARRIVAL AT SCENE. AMIN TOOK FLOOR TO SAY A FEW KIND WORDS ABOUT TOLBERT AND LIBERIA, ITERAT OAU POLICY ON ANGOLA, AND GIVE HIS VIEW OF WHAT MUST BE DONE IN MIDEAST: ISRAEL TOOK PALESTINIANS' TERRITORY, AND THERE CAN BE NO PEACE UNTIL ISRAELIS GIVE IT BACK.

4. USDEL, ALTHOUGH OVERSHADOWED BY COLORFUL FIELD MARSHAL, CLEARLY MADE FINE IMPRESSION ON LIBERIANS. MEMBERS OF USDEL WERE ALWAYS IN POSITIONS OF HONOR, WARMLY RECEIVED BY HOSTS AND GUESTS, AND ADEQUATELY COVERED BY MEDIA, PARTICULARLY TELEVISION.

5. AS EMBASSY HAD ANTICIPATED, PRESENTATION OF US ASSISTANCE PACKAGE WAS ECLIPSED BY PREOCCUPATION OF LIBERIAN OFFICIALDOM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH ARDUOUS INAUGURAL PROGRAM, CABINET RE-STRUCTURING AND PREPARATIONS FOR OAU MEETINGS. RESPONSIBLE MINISTERS (E.G. PLANNING AND ECON AFFAIRS' NEAL) PRESENT AT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT THOUGHT PACKAGE "ROUTINE." EFFECT HAS BEEN TO DELAY SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT USDEL HAD ANNOUNCED ITS READINESS TO SIGN. IN OUR VIEW THIS IS A FAVORABLE, IF UNPLANNED, DEVELOPMENT. FOR WHEN SIGNING CEREMONY DOES TAKE PLACE (AND WE ARE STILL HOPING FOR THIS WEEK), IT WILL NOT BE SUBMERGED IN A MYRIAD OF STORIES

ADULATING PRESIDENT THAT HAVE ENGULFED PRESS FOR PAST 10
DAYS.

6. SINCE DRAFTING FOREGOING A MINISTRY OF PLANNING SOURCE HAS
GIVEN US FOLLOWING INFO ON COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS: OUT
OF FOUR-YEAR PLAN'S \$415 MILLION EXPENDITURES, \$257
MILLION WILL BE FINANCED BY FOREIGN LOANS AND GRANTS AND THE
REMAINING \$158 MILLION FROM DOMESTIC RESOURCES. TOTAL PLAN
EXPENDITURES WILL BE ALLOCATED TO THE VARIOUS SECTORS ON A
PERCENTAGE BASIS AS FOLLOWS: 18 PERCENT SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES; 12 PERCENT PUBLIC UTILITIES; 42 PERCENT TTRANSPORT
AND COMMUNICATIONS (90 PERCENT WILL BE FOR ROADS); 17 PERCENT
AGRICULTURE; 11 PERCENT OTHERS (FORESTRY, INDUSTRY, OAU CONF-
ERENCE CENTER, ETC.)
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